

Appl. No. 09/996,279

Amdt. Dated June 23, 2004

Reply to Office Action of March 26, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-20 remain in the application. Claims 1-20 are subject to examination and claims 21-25, which were previously withdrawn from examination, have been previously canceled. Claim 1 has been amended.

On page 2 of the Office action, claims 1-2 and 4-20 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Chang et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,365,465), presumably the Examiner intended to refer to Chan et al. because the '465 patent is in the name of Chan et al., (hereinafter "Chan") in view of Burghartz et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,461,250) (hereinafter "Burghartz") under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

The rejection has been noted and independent claim 1 has been amend to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. Support for the change is found in the previously presented claims of the instant application.

Appl. No. 09/996,279

Amdt. Dated June 23, 2004

Reply to Office Action of March 26, 2004

Before discussing the prior art in detail, it is believed that a brief review of the invention as claimed, would be helpful.

Claim 1 calls for, inter alia, a method for fabricating a

double gate MOSFET, which has the steps in the following sequence:

producing gates aligned accurately with one another by:

providing a substrate structure having a silicon substrate layer;

patterning the semiconductor layer resulting in a semiconductor layer structure provided as a channel of the double gate MOSFET;

depositing a second separation layer on the semiconductor layer structure and the first separation layer;

completely embedding the semiconductor layer structure in the first and second separation layers by patterning the first and second separation layers;

Appl. No. 09/996,279

Amdt. Dated June 23, 2004

Reply to Office Action of March 26, 2004

depositing a second insulation layer on a structure formed of the first and second separation layers;

vertically etching two depressions disposed along one direction, the two depressions dimensioned such that the semiconductor layer structure is situated completely between them, during the etching of the two depressions, the second insulation layer, the first and second separation layers and, in each case on both sides, an edge section of the semiconductor layer structure being etched through completely in each case;

filling the depressions with an electrically conductive material;

forming a contact hole in the second insulation layer;

removing a region of the separation layers extending from the contact hole to the semiconductor layer structure and in which region the semiconductor layer structure is embedded in the separation layers by etching the region of the separation layers through the contact hole;

Appl. No. 09/996,279

Amdt. Dated June 23, 2004

Reply to Office Action of March 26, 2004

applying third insulation layers on inner walls of the region of removed separation layers and on surfaces of the semiconductor layer structure; and

introducing a further electrically conductive material into the region of the removed separation layers.

Chan discloses a method for forming a double-gate MOSFET transistor. The method utilizes a selective lateral epitaxial growth of silicon from an existing single crystal silicon MOSFET channel to form the source/drain regions. The source/drain regions are bounded by pre-defined dielectric boundaries and are thereby limited in size to the local source/drain regions.

The dielectric which bounds the selective epitaxial growth is used as a self-aligned implant mask for selectively forming the heavily doped source/drain regions. The dielectric is removed after the source/drain formation to form a suspended silicon channel. The gate insulator and the gate electrodes are subsequently formed to complete the MOSFET.

It is submitted that the Examiner's analysis of the features of claim 1 and the comparison with the features shown in Chan

Appl. No. 09/996,279

Amdt. Dated June 23, 2004

Reply to Office Action of March 26, 2004

is not correct.

Claim 1 recites the feature of "forming a contact hole in the second insulation layer." The Examiner has not shown where this feature is shown in Chan.

Claims 1 recites the further feature of "removing a region of the separation layers extending from the contact hole to the semiconductor layer structure and in which region the semiconductor layer structure is embedded in the separation layers by etching the region of the separation layers through the contact hole" (emphasis added).

Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has incorrectly understood this feature. On page 5, lines 1-4, of the above-identified Office Action the Examiner states "forming a region of the separation layers..." (emphasis added). However, there is a fundamental and distinct difference between the claimed "removing" and "forming." It appears that the Examiner has not correctly understood and analyzed this feature recited in claim 1 of the instant application. In any event, there is no corresponding feature of "forming..." recited in claim 1 with any of the features disclosed in Chan. The feature of "forming..." recited in

Appl. No. 09/996,279

Amdt. Dated June 23, 2004

Reply to Office Action of March 26, 2004

claim 1 is an important feature of the present invention.

Claim 1 now also recites in the body of the claim that the feature of producing gates aligned accurately with one another, which is not disclosed in Chan.

Moreover, there are clear differences between the fabrication method of the present claimed invention and that of Chan. The manner of forming the structure of Chan is totally different from the claimed method. In the present invention, the first and second spacer layers are patterned such that the semiconductor layer structure remains completely embedded in the first and second spacer layers. In contrast to Chan, the present invention discloses that the channel forming layer 4A is completely embedded by the layers 3 and 5. See Fig. 4 of the instant application. The Examiner acknowledges that Chan is deficient in this respect and attempts to make up for the deficiency with the disclosure of Burghartz. Additionally, claim 1 recites that the steps according to the present invention are performed in the recited sequence, which enables obtaining the advantages and benefits of the present invention, namely, an accurate alignment of the gates (topside and underside) in a technologically uncomplicated and relatively simple manner. This result is now recited in claim

Appl. No. 09/996,279

Amdt. Dated June 23, 2004

Reply to Office Action of March 26, 2004

1. Thus, for example, after the recited step of "patterning the semiconductor layer resulting in a semiconductor layer

provided as a channel of the double gate MOSFET", the next step that follows is a step of "depositing a second separation layer on the semiconductor layer structure and the first separation layer." This is not true of Chan in which there is no depositing step of a second separation layer after the patterning step (shown in Fig. 2g of Chan), as recited in claim 1 of the instant application. Notwithstanding the Examiner's remarks, the recitation that the steps are performed in a particular sequence should be afforded patent weight. Further, as discussed above, Chan does not show "removing a region of the separation layers extending from the contact hole to the semiconductor layer structure and in which region the semiconductor layer structure is embedded in the separation layers by etching the region of the separation layers through the contact hole" as recited in claim 1.

Burghartz discloses a dual gate thin film MOSFET device having multiple semiconductor layers sandwiched by semiconductor layers with different energy band structure to automatically confine carriers to the channel layers without the need for channel grading or modulation doping.

Appl. No. 09/996,279

Amdt. Dated June 23, 2004

Reply to Office Action of March 26, 2004

Burghartz does not overcome the deficiencies of Chan. Nor is Burghartz properly combinable with Chan.

While the Examiner has pointed to specific provisions of secondary Burghartz reference as allegedly providing basis for combining the references, the Examiner has not shown any reason in the primary Chan reference why one skilled in the art would even want to modify Chan in the first instance as suggested by the Examiner. It is inconceivable that one skilled in the art would identify the secondary Burghartz reference and then search the prior art and find the primary Chan reference and then modify it as proposed. It is respectfully submitted that the only reason for combining Chan and Burghartz is hindsight reconstruction of the prior art after having read applicants' disclosure.

It is submitted that the Examiner has not shown and articulated sufficient teaching, motivation, or suggestion in the prior art and particularly in the primary Chan reference for combining Chan and Burghartz as proposed.

Further, it is submitted that the claimed sequence of steps results in a new and advantageous result, namely the very accurate alignment of the gate electrodes which has not been



Appl. No. 09/996,279

Amdt. Dated June 23, 2004

Reply to Office Action of March 26, 2004

heretofore achieved in the prior art. Therefore, the claimed sequence should be afforded patentable weight and not dismissed as the Examiner has done in the above-identified Office Action.

Clearly, the references do not show or teach "a method for fabricating a double gate MOSFET, which comprises the steps in the following sequence for producing gates aligned accurately with one another" as recited in claim 1 of the instant application, or "forming a contact hole in the second insulation layer" and "removing a region of the separation layers extending from the contact hole to the semiconductor layer structure and in which region the semiconductor layer structure is embedded in the separation layers by etching the region of the separation layers through the contact hole" and "producing gates aligned accurately with one another" as recited in claim 1 of the instant application.

In the first paragraph on page 8 of the above-identified Office Action, claim 3 has been rejected as being obvious over Chan in view of Shimizu (U.S. Pat. No. 5,753,541) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Appl. No. 09/996,279

Amdt. Dated June 23, 2004

Reply to Office Action of March 26, 2004

The foregoing discussion of Chan is equally applicable in the rejection of claim 3, which depends from claim 1.

Shimizu discloses a method for fabricating a thin film transistor with a high carrier mobility and a high on/off ration. Nor is Shimizu properly combinable with Chan.

While the Examiner has pointed to specific provisions of secondary Shimuzu reference as allegedly providing basis for combining the references, the Examiner has not shown any reason in the primary Chan reference why one skilled in the art would even want to modify Chan in the first instance as suggested by the Examiner. It is inconceivable that one skilled in the art would identify the secondary Shimuzu reference and then search the prior art and find the primary Chan reference and then modify it as proposed. It is respectfully submitted that the only reason for combining Chan and Shimuzu is hindsight reconstruction of the prior art after having read applicants' disclosure.

Shimizu does not overcome the deficiencies of Chan (and Burghartz, even if the Examiner relied on the latter reference, which he has not, as an additional secondary reference in the rejection of claim 3).

Appl. No. 09/996,279

Amdt. Dated June 23, 2004

Reply to Office Action of March 26, 2004

Upon evaluation of the Examiner's comments, it is respectfully believed that the evidence adduced by the Examiner is

insufficient to establish a prima facie case of obviousness with respect to the claims. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to withdraw the rejection.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claim 1. Claim 1 is, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art. The dependent claims are believed to be patentable as well because they all are ultimately dependent on claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-20 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate receiving a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out. In the alternative, the entry of the amendment is requested, as it is believed to place the application in better condition for appeal, without requiring extension of the field of search.

Appl. No. 09/996,279

Amdt. Dated June 23, 2004

Reply to Office Action of March 26, 2004

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition  
for extension is herewith made.

Please charge any other fees that might be due with respect to  
Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner and  
Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,

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FDP/kf

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